

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2015

**MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD,
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUMMARY

1. Nine motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 13 for debate at the Council meeting on Wednesday 16th September 2015.
2. The motions submitted are listed overleaf. In accordance with the protocol agreed by the Council on 21st May 2008, the motions are listed by turns, one from each group, continuing in rotation until all motions submitted are included. The rotation starts with any group(s) whose motion(s) were not reached at the previous meeting.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Borough. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. There is no specific duration set for this agenda item and consideration of the attached motions may continue until the time limit for the meeting is reached. The guillotine procedure at Council Procedure Rule 9.2 does not apply to motions on notice and any of the attached motions which have not been put to the vote when the time limit for the meeting is reached will be deemed to have fallen. A motion which is not put to the vote at the current meeting may be resubmitted for the next meeting but is not automatically carried forward.

MOTIONS

Set out overleaf are the motions that have been submitted.

12.1 Motion regarding Rich Mix Cultural Foundation

Proposer: Councillor Oliur Rahman

Secunder: Councillor Shahed Ali

Please note that the above motion includes information defined as Exempt in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The motion is therefore not for publication and is included in Part 2 of the Council's agenda, for consideration during closed session.

12.2 This motion has been withdrawn.

12.3 Motion regarding experimental borough wide 20mph speed limit

Proposer: Councillor Andrew Wood

Seconder: Councillor Chris Chapman

This Council notes the requirement to make roads safer for all road users.

The Council further notes that for the borough wide 20mph speed limit to be effective, then it must be achieved with the compliance of road users and cannot be enforced on them especially when the police are unable or unwilling to enforce the limit.

The Council notes that in introducing the 20mph speed limit it stated:-

'Successful 20 mph zones and 20 mph speed limits should be self-enforcing'

However, the flawed process whereby the 20mph limit was introduced in Tower Hamlets makes self-enforcement improbable.

Residents do not feel that they were involved and there is already evidence that there is little respect regarding the way in which the borough wide 20mph limit has been implemented, not least as it was one of the final decisions of the former, discredited Mayoral administration.

There are already local concerns as residents have observed police vehicles routinely exceeding the speed limit whilst knowing that ambulances on emergency calls have to drive slowly because of this change does not inspire confidence.

The result is that whilst law-abiding citizens drive more slowly, others do not.

Actual road experience suggests that there is now a greater gap between the fastest and slowest vehicles on the road, more overtaking of vehicles and vehicles are slowing down before reaching the borough's few speed cameras which are currently the only methods of enforcing the speed limit. None of these changes improve safety and overtaking makes minor roads in particular more dangerous.

In 2014 when Tower Hamlets Council consulted on implementing a borough wide 20mph limit there were just 171 responses. It should be noted that those consulted by the former administration did not include elected ward councillors. The result was:

For a borough wide 20mph speed limit – 137

Against the limit – 23

Neutral – 11 people

This figure includes 103 responses (60%) organised by Tower Hamlets Wheelers (the local branch of the London Cycling Campaign) through an automated form on their website.

The Council notes that according to the 2011 census there were 43,589 cars and vans owned by residents of the borough and vehicles per household range from 32% in Spitalfields and Banglatown to 54% in St Katharines and Wapping.

8,112 residents travelled to work by bicycle.

137 For responses represents 0.31% of the people with a car or 0.05% of the total population of the Borough.

The Council believes that this is an inadequate response on which to design policy and to enforce changes on 43,589 overwhelmingly law abiding road users.

The Council believes that If a borough wide 20mph limit is to be introduced beyond the eighteen month experiment as at present, then it must have credibility.

This Council requests the Mayor to consider and report back to the council, the following;

1. That a decision on whether to end or continue the 20mph speed limit is taken via a residents' consultation and / or referendum.
2. That this consultation should take place during the spring of 2016, a year after the scheme was first implemented so that a final decision can be made before the end of the 18 month trial in October 2016.
3. That the consultation should be more sophisticated than a simple yes or no question and should to seek provide residents with more options about what speeds they think appropriate in different areas and different road types.
4. That the process by which this consultation takes place and the questions asked should be discussed in Council in advance.
5. That the Council seek to use this opportunity to fully engage with residents and properly engage with them. This Council in the past has had a lamentable record on public engagement, this is an opportunity to engage with and empower residents to make a major decision. It would therefore greatly assist with the Councils transparency agenda.
6. The Council should seek to engage more than the 171 people who responded to the first consultation and should aspire to engaging with at least 10,000 residents (25% of road users or less than 4% of total residents) if this limit is to have any credibility.

The Council believes that roads are safer when road users use roads more safely. A borough wide 20mph limit will only work when the majority of road users respect the process by which the decision is reached.

12.4 Motion regarding ISIS – A tragic and sickening loss of lives in Tunisia

Proposer: Councillor Rabina Khan

Seconder: Councillor Oliur Rahman

Tower Hamlets Council notes

- The recent tragic, brutal and shocking deaths - on 29th June 2015 - of British citizens who were on holiday in Tunisia
- The earlier tragic disappearance of local schoolgirls who are assumed to have joined ISIS in Syria
- The ongoing threat of ISIS to all – especially the young people
- The potential of radicalisation of youth by misguided and vile ideology of ISIS who do not represent Islam but have hijacked it and are abusing the name

Tower Hamlets Council resolves

- To extend all our sympathy and condolences to the families and friends of those who so tragically lost their lives in Tunisia during this extremely difficult period
- To reaffirm our commitment to resisting the politics of hatred and division in all its forms, and in this specific case, the vile ideology of ISIS who have hijacked the name of Islam and are manipulating young minds. In particular, for ISIS to use the holy month of Ramadan - when Muslims are supposed to be extra conscious of the duties of charity, forgiveness, kindness and looking after all living beings – let alone human beings - for such activity demonstrate their clear and evil misrepresentation of Islam
- To welcome, in April 2015, the distribution of the council's counter-terrorism guide for parents at schools and places of worship, and to continue to develop this strategy based on effectiveness and resident feedback
- To continue to work together and get to know one another at personal and human level – from all religions and none – to dismantle any misguided perceptions, propaganda and misrepresentation of each other in our society
- To observe a minute's silence for the Tunisian and 7/7 victims at the full Council meeting
- Write to local schools to launch a competition to hear from young people about their views and potential solutions and suggestions to the radicalisation issue – the winner should be invited to meet all Members/representatives of all three Groups in the Council and be given an opportunity to present the winning proposal in the Chamber at an appropriate Council meeting

12.5 Motion regarding the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge

Proposer: Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs

Seconder: Councillor Rachael Saunders

This Council notes:

1. 1 in 5 people has a mental health condition at any one time.
2. The World Health Organisation predicts that depression will be the second most common health condition worldwide by 2020.
3. Mental ill health has an economic and social cost of £105 billion each year in England alone.
4. People with a severe mental illness die up to 20 years younger than their peers in the UK.
5. There is often a circular relationship between mental health and issues such as housing, overcrowding, employment, family problems or debt.
6. The Local Authority Mental Health Challenge was set up by Centre for Mental Health, Mental Health Foundation, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness, Royal College of Psychiatrists and YoungMinds, to support councils to take a proactive approach to improving mental health in local communities.

This Council further notes:

1. The local Mental Health Strategy states that “Tower Hamlets has amongst the highest levels of mental health need in England.”
2. The strategic plan, recently revised under the current Mayor, includes a strategic priority to “reduce health inequalities and promote mental and physical wellbeing”, including a specific action to “promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the council and community”.
3. Full Council previously passed a motion on 22 Jan 2014, agreeing to sign up to the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge and commit to its 10 actions, but the previous Mayor and Cabinet failed to take this forward.

This Council believes:

1. As a local authority we have a crucial role to play in improving the mental health of everyone in our community and tackling some of the widest and most entrenched inequalities in health.
2. Mental health should be a priority across all the local authority’s functions, from public health, adult social care and children’s services to housing, planning and public realm.

3. All Councillors, whether members of the Executive or Scrutiny and in our community and casework roles, can play a positive role in championing mental health on an individual and strategic basis.

This Council resolves:

To publicly sign the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge.

To support implementation of the Challenge and its commitments through an action plan, which integrates with and builds on the council's strategic plan and the Health and Wellbeing Board's Mental Health Strategy.

We commit to the 10 pledges that form the Mental Health Challenge:

1. Appoint an elected member as 'mental health champion' across the Council
2. Identify a 'lead officer' for mental health to link in with colleagues across the Council
3. Follow the implementation framework for the mental health strategy where it is relevant to the Council's work and local needs
4. Work to reduce inequalities in mental health in our community
5. Work with the NHS to integrate health and social care support
6. Promote wellbeing and initiate and support action on public mental health, for example through our joint health and wellbeing strategy
7. Tackle discrimination on the grounds of mental health in our community
8. Encourage positive mental health in our schools, colleges and workplaces
9. Proactively engage and listen to people of all ages and backgrounds about what they need for better mental health
10. Restate the commitment to the Time to Change pledge, the national programme to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination.

We further commit to support councillors and staff to promote positive mental health and support people with mental health problems:

11. Introduce mental health awareness training for all elected members and promote the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge guide for councillors, to ensure we can support our constituents and know the appropriate referral routes.
12. Introduce training for frontline staff, such as housing and lettings teams, so they can identify, signpost and support people with mental health needs appropriately, including knowing the right referral routes to ensure people get timely help.

12.6 Motion regarding CIL Boundaries on the Isle of Dogs

Proposer: Councillor Peter Golds

Seconded: Councillor Andrew Wood

The Council notes:

That in April 2015 Tower Hamlets Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

That across the Isle of Dogs there are four CIL zones;

- Zone 1 £200 per square meter – including the One Housing managed Barkantine estate
- Zone 2 £65 per square meter – including the One Housing managed Kingsbridge estate
- Zone 3 £35 per square meter – including the One Housing managed Samuda and St Johns estates
- And in some areas the CIL has been set at zero.

That the Isle of Dogs is one of the most intense development areas in London with some of the highest sales prices in London for new developments but has been divided up between these four zones.

That when officers were questioned as to how these zones had been set councillors were informed;

“It is the prevailing sales values of an area that must be taken into account, i.e. an average of all property values across an area taking into account all property-specific circumstances, such as housing mix and having or not having a river view.”

There are two fundamental flaws in this calculation methodology;

1. It assumes that a 2 bedroom apartment in a brand new 40 storey tower with swimming pools, marble floors, gyms, concierges, designer furniture designed for a foreign property market will be sold for the same price as a One Housing Group maintained 1960's local authority-developed two bedroom apartment sold through a local estate agent.
2. It does not take account of local knowledge. Equivalent apartments in similar developments achieve very similar sales prices across the three main CIL zones on the island. This can be easily verified by using price comparison websites like Zoopla or even examining advertisements in local estate agents.

That there is also a third fundamental flaw in the process that set the CIL boundaries. During the period of time that CIL was being set One Housing Group were discussing with the council their proposed Project Stone. Project Stone would potentially replace 2,000 1960's built housing units with 9,000 brand new housing units. The new private units would be built closest to Canary Wharf, the river or the Crossharbour DLR station i.e. all locations that would maximise their sales value.

That in the documents presented to the One Housing Board regarding Project Stone and understood to have been shared with Tower Hamlets, the Crossharbour and Samuda areas are described as “development hotspots.”

Furthermore One Housing confirm that they are marketing their proposals to “international investors, company purchases and those seeking midweek accommodation.”

The Council further notes:

That the failure to not take account of Project Stone, the price discrepancy between old and brand new developments and the inability to identify like for like in the process could cost the Council at least £43.4 million pounds in lost CIL funds if Project Stone were to go ahead as proposed. The £43.4 million number is a calculation the Conservative Group has done as the Council has chosen not to do a similar calculation despite it being requested to do so.

Project Stone - One Housing Group & Implications of not changing CIL boundaries

	Original Number of Homes	New Number of Homes	Increase in Homes	Increase %	CIL Zone	Number of private units approximately 70%	Avg Size Apartment sq m	CIL at £35 per sq m	CIL at £65 per sq m	CIL at £200 per sq m	Existing CIL on Island	New Island wide CIL at £200 per sq m	Difference
Barkantine	769	3,467	2,698	351%	1	2,427	70			£33,976,600	£33,976,600	£33,976,600	£0
St Johns	607	2,809	2,202	363%	3	1,966	70	£4,817,435			£4,817,435	£27,528,200	£22,710,765
Samuda	517	2,213	1,696	328%	3	1,549	70	£3,795,295			£3,795,295	£21,687,400	£17,892,105
Kingsbridge	134	407	273	204%	2	285	70		£1,296,295		£1,296,295	£3,988,600	£2,692,305
	2,027	8,896	6,869	339%		6,227		£8,612,730	£1,296,295	£33,976,600	£43,885,625	£87,180,800	£43,295,175

That the CIL from Samuda & St Johns (5,022 apartments) would not even be enough to build and outfit one primary school, which would mean all of the other supporting infrastructure would have to be subsidised by other parts of the Borough.

Therefore;

This Council recommends that CIL be set universally across the island at £200 per square meter to reflect the global appetite for apartments in one of the most attractive parts of London and that this be done at the earliest possible opportunity.

12.7 Motion regarding Welfare Reform Bill

Proposer: Councillor Mahbub Alam

Seconder: Councillor Oliur Rahman

The Council notes that:

The biggest single cut to welfare spending is set to come from extending the freeze in working age benefits, tax credits and local housing allowance out to 2020. That will affect 13 million families who will lose an average of £260 a year as a result of this one measure. After about 2017 this will mean that most benefit rates will have fallen back behind their 2008 levels both relative to price inflation and relative to earnings growth”

The two Labour MPs, Rushanara Ali and Jim Fitzpatrick, did not vote against Tory Party’s welfare reform Bill in the House of Commons

As a result of their inaction, and many other Labour Members of Parliament, who are technically in opposition to Conservative Government, the House of Commons backed the Welfare Reform and Work Bill by 308 to 124 votes.

Forty-eight Labour MPs defied orders to abstain and instead voted against the bill, which includes plans to limit child tax credit to two children

Acting Labour leader Harriet Harman suffered a significant rebellion in the vote.

Forty-eight Labour MPs defied orders to abstain and instead voted against the bill, which includes plans to limit child tax credit.

Comment made by Labour MP Diane Abbott “Just voted against Tory welfare bill. Sorry for colleagues who knew it was wrong but abstained. We weren’t sent to Parliament to abstain”

The Council resolves:

This Council is against the blanket, punitive and ideologically-driven austerity agenda adopted by the Conservative Government

To write to the two local Labour MPs, Rushanara Ali and Jim Fitzpatrick (who did not vote against Tory Party’s welfare bill), George Osborne and relevant Minister to highlight the devastating impact of this Conservative Welfare Bill on our families in Tower Hamlets who are struggling to make ends meet despite their best efforts due to cuts

The impact will be further highlighted due to particular impact of poverty and child deprivation in Tower Hamlets. The Institute for Fiscal Studies says that nearly two thirds of British children living in poverty are in working families and that tax and benefit changes announced in the budget will increase inequality.

Praises Labour Leadership hopeful Jeremy Corbyn MP who is leading the fight against austerity - Tory social engineering, privatisation of Public Sector and NHS – who did not vote against this ideologically-driven Tory Bill.

12.8 Motion regarding Mainstream Grants and Commissioners

Proposer: Councillor Rachael Saunders

Seconded: Councillor Danny Hassell

This Council notes:

1. The decision of Department for Communities and Local Government to appoint Commissioners to exercise and oversee certain executive functions within the council, following serious governance concerns identified under the previous administration.
2. The Mayor's commitment to open and transparent decision making.
3. That the role of the commissioners is due to the previous mayor's failures and that we need to work towards an exit of the commissioners and the reassertion of democratic decision making.
4. The previous Mayor and Tower Hamlets First failed to co-operate with the process – the Labour Group has and will continue to take a more active role in grants decisions.
5. The importance of scrutiny of the executive's grants decisions.
6. Recent decisions made on Mainstream Grants (MSG) made by the Commissioners for 2015-2018.
7. There were over 370 applications for MSG, with £9.1m in funding allocated to 131 projects in the borough.
8. The importance of a strong, open, honest and supportive relationship with local third sector organisations.
9. A number of Labour and Conservative councillors attended the Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting for grant funding allocations, to highlight a number of excellent local organisations who were not recommended for funding.

This Council believes:

1. There was a severe lack of transparency and accountability regarding decisions on grant making under the previous administration.
2. There was a lack of clear and consistent benchmarking, objectives and auditing for grant funding under the previous administration.
3. As a result the former Mayor undermined the process which led, with other governance failures, to the appointment of Commissioners.
4. There is a clear role for elected members in informing the grant making process and understanding local need, but that this must be done within a clear framework to ensure transparency, scrutiny and accountability.

5. The mainstream grants process has a key role in supporting the excellent work of many local organisations.
6. There is a need to establish a fair process for grant funding, which reflects local need of communities across the borough and maintains the confidence of local residents

This Council resolves:

1. To call on the Mayor to establish a fair, transparent and robust process for future grant funding so that residents, voluntary organisations and other relevant authorities can be satisfied that decisions on grant funding can be determined by the council and its elected members.
2. To call on the Mayor to introduce an effective standing scrutiny mechanism.
3. To call on the Executive to do everything within its power to ensure a fair process for grants funding and to work with the CVS to support organisations in accessing further funding.

12.9 Motion regarding TfL and CS2 Cycle Superhighway Upgrade

Proposer: Councillor Amina Ali

Seconder: Councillor Asma Begum

This Council notes:

1. That TfL is currently carrying out works along Whitechapel Road/Mile End Road/Bow Road to implement the CS2 Cycle Superhighway upgrade.
2. That these works are due to last until Spring 2016.
3. The changes to the Mile End Road/Burdett Road/Grove Road crossing and the introduction of a right turn prohibition at Mile End.
4. A serious increase in traffic congestion on Grove Road, Roman Road, Old Ford Road and streets around Hamlets Way.

This Council believes:

1. TfL has vastly underestimated the impact of the changes.
2. This is making all of these roads more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.

This Council resolves:

1. To express its concern to TfL about these poorly designed changes.
2. To request Council officers to meet urgently with TfL to review traffic flow on other roads as a result of the changes to Mile End Road, in order to address the impact on other roads and agree an action plan for the safety of road users.